

APPROVED: 3/13/12

**Rockville Environment Commission
Minutes of the Meeting of Tuesday, February 14, 2012
Held at the Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue**

Attendance

Commissioners Present: John Becker, Steve Cardon, Julie Palakovich Carr, Kris Dighe, Anne Goodman, Beri Kravitz, and Clark Reed

Commissioners Absent: Alicia Hosmer and Devinie Lye

Guests: Councilmember Mark Pierzchala
Mark Charles, Environmental Management
Erica Shingara, Environmental Management

Meeting Commencement

The meeting convened at 7:31 pm by Chair Dighe.

Introduction of Councilmember Mark Pierzchala

Councilmember Pierzchala has been assigned to serve as the liaison between the Commission and the Mayor and Council (he is also liaison for several other Boards and Commissions). Mr. Pierzchala indicated he was pleased to be the Commission liaison and indicated he would likely attend at least 80% of the meetings and be active. He discussed his background, including College Gardens President for 4 years, and his history on neighborhood stormwater issues, including installation of 4 rain barrels of his own. He believes that environmental issues are mostly an easy sell in Rockville and have substantial residential support. Finally he noted that he frequently bikes around the City and finds it easy to do.

Sustainable Maryland Certified

Erica Shingara briefed the Commission on Rockville's ongoing efforts to pursue this certification from the Maryland Municipal League and the University of Maryland. There are 21 other jurisdictions also pursuing this certification.

Erica reported that a sufficient number of factsheet descriptions of accomplishments have been completed for the City to move forward with a submission to MML. The point total for these accomplishments is 230 (basic certification is possible with 150 points).

The citizen survey was a success. There were 225 participants. The results were summarized and briefly discussed. A question was raised about the best methods of sharing this information in the future. The Commission will discuss that further in future meetings. The Commission then considered a concise mission statement describing the purposes of the City's sustainability program, the principles guiding this initiative, and the overall tactics planned to accomplish the mission. Reed moved and Palakovich Carr seconded a motion adopting the mission statement. The motion passed 7-0-0.

High Performance Building Tax Credit

Erica Shingara also briefed the Commission on the status of the high performance (green building) tax credit proposal. The Mayor and Council instructed staff to develop a draft ordinance (City Code Chapter 22) to authorize the tax credit in time for inclusion in the FY 2013 budget. In a second step, the Mayor and Council will determine whether to include specific (general fund) dollars supporting the tax credit in the FY 2013 budget. The ordinance was introduced at the January 23 Mayor and Council meeting. The Mayor and Council plan a public hearing on the ordinance scheduled for March 5, 2012. Clark Reed will attend and represent the Commission at the hearing. Adoption is planned for April.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

Approval of the January 10, 2012 meeting minutes was moved by Palakovich Carr and seconded by Goodman. The motion passed 7-0-0.

Environmental Excellence Awards

Per the instruction of the Commission after its January meeting, on January 24, 2012, Chair Dighe sent a letter to Montgomery College indicating that its award nomination could not go forward because the College had decided against paying its stormwater utility fee. On February 10, 2012 the College replied and requested reconsideration. Both letters were distributed to Commissioners. After reviewing the correspondence, Commissioners reconsidered the previous decision but decided without vote to take the same stance. Subsequently, the Mayor and Council have indicated that they do not believe the College's failure to pay its stormwater fee should by itself, preclude an Environmental Excellence Award.

In response to this situation, Commissioner Becker was assigned responsibility to revisit the current award criteria and process and recommend changes if needed.

Finally, there was a brief brainstorming session on potential nominees deserving consideration for Environmental Excellence Awards this spring. Final decisions must be made no later than the April meeting.

Strategic Planning

The Commission discussed whether organizational changes were necessary to implement the strategic priorities established by the Commission in January 2012. The decision was made that the priorities could be pursued under the existing structure. Assignments were made to committees (see assignments in the chart below) and a proposed workplan (including timeframes and milestones) to achieve or accomplish each priority was requested for the March 2012 meeting.

Environment Commission 2012 Priorities

Events	Near Term Projects	Longer Term Initiatives
<p>Participate in <i>Hometown Holidays</i> and engage in public awareness and outreach; Seek volunteers. A proposal for Recreation and Parks is due in March. (Outreach Committee)</p> <p>Conduct clean ups of the stream segment (Maryvale Creek) adopted by the Commission. (Watershed Committee)</p> <p>Participate in Earth Day/Month Observances. (Committee of the Whole)</p> <p>Meet the Mayor and Council and explain historic purpose and role of the Commission. (City Staff/M&C Liaison)</p> <p>Participate in semi-annual meetings with other Env. Boards and Commissions from other Cities. (Individual Commissioner Volunteers)</p>	<p>Prepare factsheets on activities and accomplishments in preparation for submission to Sustainable Maryland. (Committee of the Whole)</p> <p>Testify in favor of the Green Building Tax Credit proposal. If adopted, assist in bringing the credit to the attention of the business community. (Sustainable Design and Energy Committee)</p> <p>Review proposals to amend the City building code making it more stringent regarding green features required of new construction and renovations. (Sustainable Design and Energy Committee)</p> <p>Assist with the scoping and development of an environmental element for the Rockville Comprehensive Master Land Use Plan. (Committee of the Whole)</p>	<p>Serve as the Green Team for Sustainable Maryland Certification. (Committee of the Whole)</p> <p>Improve the City's overall residential recycling rate. Improve recycling facilities at City sponsored events and celebrations; and along bike trails and recreation centers. (Outreach Committee)</p> <p>Develop a relationship with environmental clubs at City schools. Identify projects to partner on with other organizations. (Outreach Committee)</p>

Kilowatt Crackdown

The Sustainable Design and Energy Committee indicated it plans to pursue a kilowatt crackdown program to encourage energy efficiency and conservation.

Stream Clean Up

Palakovich Carr reminded Commissioners that the Watershed Committee is sponsoring a stream cleanup of the segment adopted by the Commission (Maryvale Creek). The session is scheduled for Saturday, April 14 from 10:00 to 12:00. This is the same day as the Regional Potomac River watershed trash clean up effort. Commissioners and other volunteers should meet at the picnic pavilion at the park.

Environmental Management Report

Mark Charles presented the Environmental Management Report. Two of three stormwater vacancies have been filled. The third is frozen for now. Arthur Ray has been hired for the policy analyst position formerly held by Jake Marren. Shannon Philbin has been hired for the outreach coordinator position formerly held by Amanda Matheny. The third (half time) position was dedicated to commercial FOG inspections and compliance. While we will continue to support the ongoing enforcement actions, we will be unable to conduct further inspections until the position is filled.

Mr. Charles reminded Commissioners of the planned *Earth Month* activities and invited Commissioners to participate. He also reminded Commissioners that they should be identifying procurement needs for this year over the next several months.

Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 9:37 pm by unanimous acclamation.

Next Commission Meeting

The next Commission meeting is *tentatively* scheduled for **Tuesday, March 13, 2012 at 7:30 pm** in the **Diamondback Conference Room** of the **Rockville City Hall, 111 Maryland Avenue**, Rockville, Maryland, 20850. The public is invited to attend.